



## PLACER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

1000 Sunset Blvd. Suite 115, Rocklin, CA 95675 (916)780-3290 FAX: (916)780-3299

# Memorandum

### PLACER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

TO: BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

FROM: JONN MELROSE

DATE: March 21, 2014

SUBJECT: Letter of Support for AB 2703, a Bill to increase County Veteran Service Officer Funding

### ACTION REQUESTED:

Support of AB 2703. A bill to appropriate \$6 million from California's General Fund to the Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) to fund the activities of County Veteran Service Officers (CVSO)

### BACKGROUND:

This office was contacted by his professional organization, the California Association of County Veteran Service Officers (CACVSO), and their lobbyist, Pete Conaty, support this bill. This bill would add \$3.6 million, for a total of \$5 million, to CalVet to distribute to the 56 counties supporting a CVSO.

An increase in funding from the State would mean less of Placer Counties own General Fund would be used. This increase would allow a redirection of those funds to other areas within the County.

There are four sources of funding for the CVSO. First is the Placer County General Fund. This amount shifts based on other sources of funding. In general, the General Fund makes up the difference between what the other funding sources are and the total budget.

We receive Subvention funding, Medi-Cal Avoidance and Licenses Plate fees.

Subvention is determined by CalVet and is based on the number of claims completed by a specific office. If we get more money from the State, it is possible that this amount would increase. More likely is that each county would get more subvention money from each claim. (direct effect – more claims = more money)

Medi-Cal Avoidance is determined by the number of referrals we get from HHS. I've reached out to HHS to improve their catchment of these claims. (indirect effect – HHS HAS to identify the claimant as a veteran. More staff would allow more and better training for HHS/CSS)



## PLACER COUNTY VETERANS SERVICE OFFICE

1000 Sunset Blvd. Suite 115, Rocklin, CA 95675 (916)780-3290 FAX: (916)780-3299

License Plate Fees are determined by the zip code of the registered owner of the vehicle. The more "Veteran" or "Honoring Veteran" plates sold/renewed the more money comes into the county. (no effect – simply the number of plates sold/renewed in a particular zip code)

As of today, the California Association of County Veteran Service Officers (CACVSO), California State Association of Counties (CSAC), San Joaquin, San Bernardino, and Kings Counties have notified Assemblymember Quirk-Silva of their strong support of this bill.

### **PROBLEM STATEMENT:**

None. If the funding is not approved, it is anticipated the current funding levels will remain.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

It is unknown how CalVet would distribute these funds. It is expected that current rates of subvention funding would double.

# County of Placer

## Board of Supervisors

175 FULWEILER AVENUE  
AUBURN, CALIFORNIA 95603  
530-889-4010 • FAX: 530-889-4009  
PLACER CO. TOLL FREE # 800-488-4308

JACK DURAN  
District 1

ROBERT M. WEYGANDT  
District 2

JIM HOLMES  
District 3

KIRK UHLER  
District 4

JENNIFER MONTGOMERY  
District 5



April 8, 2014

The Honorable Sharon Quirk-Silva  
California State Assembly  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, California 95814

### Re: AB 2703 – Funding for County Veterans Service Officers - SUPPORT

Dear Assemblywoman Quirk-Silva:

On behalf of Placer County and the 30,000 veterans we represent, I am writing in support of Assembly Bill 2703, to increase funding for County Veteran Service Officers (CVSOs). If enacted, this bill would increase the amount of State assistance to CVSOs to \$6 million dollars statewide.

California is home to approximately two million veterans and their families. Some \$3.65 billion in federal benefits comes into the State every year according to the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CDVA or CalVet). The majority of these benefits were realized with help from our counties and their respective CVSOs

The State currently allocates \$2.54 million per year to be distributed among the 56 California counties that provide veteran assistance, unchanged since 2003. While Placer County provides 75% of the budget for our CVSO, the CalVet funding accounts for less than 20%.

Our CVSO is instrumental in helping our returning veterans in understanding the complex VA process. During the first two months of this calendar year alone, our small County Veteran Service Office has garnered over \$540,000 in retroactive payments and over \$44,000 per month in direct federal payments to our veterans and their dependents. **This equates to approximately a \$6.00 return for every \$1.00 the State or the County allocates.** It is important to note that the monthly benefit will continue until the claimant passes away. Therefore an action completed today can benefit the veteran and family for decades to come.

Placer County strongly supports Assembly Bill 2703. Increasing CVSO funding at the State level would allow more education, outreach, and direct Federal financial benefits for our local veterans and their families.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Jonn Melrose, County Veteran Service Officer at (916) 780-3290.

Sincerely,

Jack Duran  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors, Placer County

Cc: The Honorable Mark Leno - Chair, Senate Budget Committee  
The Honorable Nancy Skinner - Chair, Assembly Budget Committee  
The Honorable Richard Roth - Chair, Senate Budget Subcommittee #4  
The Honorable Tom Daly - Chair, Assembly Budget Subcommittee #4  
The Honorable Senator Ted Gaines  
The Honorable Senator Jim Nielsen  
The Honorable Assembly Member Frank Bigelow  
The Honorable Assembly Member Brian Dahle  
The Honorable Assembly Member Beth B. Gaines  
The Honorable Assembly Member Dan Logue  
Karen Lange, Peterson Consulting Inc.  
California State Association of Counties (CSAC)  
Pete Conaty and Associates